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TAGS: [EAID](#) [OTRA](#) [CS](#)

SUBJECT: MICHAEL ERIC KITE/USAID TDY REPORTING CABLE

11. Summary: USAID/W Democracy Officer, Eric Kite, from the DCHA/DG/Strategic Planning and Research Division (SAR) completed a five-day TDY (November 2 to November 6) for USAID. Mr. Kite worked with USAID grantees University of Costa Rica and Vanderbilt University and an associated multi-national team of Latin American/Caribbean survey researchers to assure USAID-funded democracy and governance surveys best serve USG foreign assistance programming and policy needs. End summary.

12. Purpose of TDY: the purpose of this TDY was to help finalize the 2006 democracy survey for Costa Rica funded by USAID/DCHA and to check progress of the website at the University of Costa Rica which will house regional survey data commissioned by USAID over the last 15 years. Additionally, Mr. Kite assisted a multi-national team of survey researchers to tailor survey reports to best serve the needs of USAID technical officers and policymakers. Specifically:

1A. Mr. Kite spent Friday (11/3) with the Centro Centroamericano de Poblacion (CCP) of the University of Costa Rica (UCR) reviewing the results of the USAID/DCHA-funded Costa Rica democracy survey, which forms the upper benchmark for democracy support and values for placing the other Latin American surveys in context. Mr. Kite also reviewed progress in an effort to improve public opinion survey collection through the use of PDAS, and the development of a UCR-designed and hosted website to house, in a single location, all of the USAID-funded Latin America/Caribbean surveys funded to date. The meeting should result in greater utility of this website for both researchers and USG policymakers.

1B. Over the weekend, Mr. Kite attended a two-day conference of survey researchers from 14 countries in the region to review initial results of their USAID-funded country surveys. The meetings resulted in the development of country and regional report formats and areas of analysis. Themes of analysis will include support for democracy and democratic institutions, political tolerance and the impact of crime and corruption on these USG development goals. The reports will emphasize potential policy implications of survey findings for the USG.

1C. Before departing Costa Rica on 11/6, Mr. Kite briefed Embassy San Jose Political, Economic and Public Affairs sections on the USAID-funded activities with UCR and briefed on the key findings of the Costa Rica country survey.

13. Observations: the TDY was a success in achieving its objectives: oversight of USAID-funded activities with the University of Costa Rica and improving the utility of USAID-funded democracy surveys throughout the region. Additionally, these regional meetings of survey researchers continue to contribute to substantial improvements in the capacity of local institutions to conduct high quality public opinion surveys and a better understanding on their part of the needs of policymakers versus academic audiences. The utility of the surveys for informing USAID programs is increasingly clear, as expressed by the other USAID

mission officers reviewing the new survey results at the conference.

Concerning the Costa Rica survey, the University of Costa Rica team expressed interest in briefing Embassy San Jose in greater depth at any time in the future.

14. Conclusions or recommendations: a complete trip report will follow to outline next steps in the completion of country and regional reports resulting from the 2006 democracy survey and in the implementation of the UCR website. This will include recommendations for report contents and suggested timeframes for Washington and regional dissemination events.

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